

February 13, 2006

TO: The Federal Communications Commission, USA
FROM: Caroline Cunningham, 676 Front St, Chicopee, MA 01013

I would like to submit these comments to the FCC's "Notice of Proposed Rulemaking" 05-311 on "video franchising"

I would like to express my concern over 05-311.

My issue is that I feel that it is very important that local government retain its ability to control local public right of way.

My second issue is that if local franchising is lost we will lose the funding for our community television stations. These stations support the first right amendment as well as cover local news and community based programming.

Today's news has become generic and sensationalized to the point that the local information is no longer there. Public Access Stations cover local government and school meetings, educational programs from art to cooking but they also provide more...

Community Public Access stations are not just TV stations they are community media facilities. Most facilities provide things like internet access and computer assistance for those without, community meeting spaces, workshops on many different topics (not just TV but internet, editing, music etc.) for people of all ages. It would be a huge loss for communities and the people within them if franchising was to become a generic one page non negotiable task.

I understand that these large Telecommunications Companies like Verizon, SBC/AT&T etc. don't want to take part in franchising, but why shouldn't they? Is it not important to allow local government to negotiate what runs in its streets and how it is put there?

Verizon and others have been using a lot of lobbying monies to sway congressmen and senators to vote for what they want. I believe it is important that the people in these communities have a voice. Without community public access how will they have that?

Please don't change the way franchising is done locally now.

Sincerely,

Caroline Cunningham, 676 Front St, Chicopee, MA 01013, (413) 433-7331